



Human Rights Division

**Legislative Recommendations within the
Human Rights Act and
Housing Discrimination Act**

December 29, 2006

Lisa K. Fair McEvers, Commissioner of Labor

The Department of Labor is required by N.D.C.C § 14-02.4-22 and N.D.C.C. § 14-02.5-15 to publish in even-numbered years a written report recommending legislative or other action to carry out the purposes of the Human Rights Act and the Housing Discrimination Act. This report is intended to meet these requirements.

2007 Legislative Recommendations

The Department of Labor recommends legislative approval of the following bills to carry out the purposes of the Human Rights Act and the Housing Discrimination Act:

1. SB 2007 is the Department of Labor agency budget. It provides the funding necessary for the department to continue its human rights enforcement activities and educational activities.
2. SB 2074 is a pre-filed Department of Labor agency bill that would amend and reenact section 14-02.5-13 of the Housing Discrimination Act. The bill proposes to broaden the powers of the department by adding provisions that give the department subpoena power for the purpose of thoroughly investigating complaints filed under the Housing Discrimination Act.
3. SB 2075 is a pre-filed Department of Labor agency bill that would amend and reenact subsection 6 of section 14-02.4-02 of the Human Rights Act. The bill proposes to clarify and make consistent the provision of the Human Rights Act defining the term “discriminatory practice.”
4. SB 2076 is a pre-filed Department of Labor agency bill that would amend and reenact section 14-02.4-22 of the Human Rights Act. The bill proposes to broaden the powers of the department by adding provisions that give the department subpoena power for the purpose of thoroughly investigating complaints filed under the Human Rights Act.

Staff Training

The Human Rights Director and all compliance investigators will attend and complete coursework at the National Fair Housing Training Academy in order to become certified fair housing investigators. Thus far, two of the department's investigators have completed the five-week program. All of the Human Rights Division staff have completed basic training in civil mediation and will continue to attend training as necessary to keep their skills current.

Educational Activities

Educating the public about human rights is important to carrying out the purposes of both the Human Rights Act and Housing Discrimination Act. The department's actions in this area will include:

- Maintaining the department's current education materials, which include: posters, brochures and materials available on the department's website.
- Providing speakers for presentations on human rights to various groups and associations throughout the state.
- Hosting booths to disseminate educational materials on human rights at conferences.
- Sponsoring events focusing on human rights.
- Emphasizing education as part of the conciliation process.